

From: Susan Kaltenbach
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 4:43pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To the Department of Justice (DOJ):

I would like to submit my comment on the issue of the Microsoft settlement.

I understand that complainants against the settlement state that it

- (a) Does not correct Microsoft's "anti-competition" errors, and
- (b) Having Microsoft donate \$1B of hardware, software and training is wrong because it perpetuates Microsoft's domination of the operating system marketplace.

I cannot comment on topic (a) because I am not well educated on the complaints and resolutions of this large and complex case. But I can comment on topic (b).

I am an individual who cares deeply about getting more underrepresented school kids interested in the sciences, and I have expended effort and mentorship to try to facilitate this. (In Washington state, "underrepresented" means racial minorities and "first generation" college students - students who are the first in their family history to attend college. I personally am a "first generation" college student.)

I've heard comments from those opposed to the \$1B donation that these kids should receive Linux software, since it is "free" and "open code," and would help loosen Microsoft's grip on the operating system's marketplace.

I want to make my message perfectly clear:

These kids would be further ghettoized if the Linux proponents get their way. The Microsoft Windows software and applications model is used throughout the business world and is the dominant international software. To donate a fringe operating system like Linux would make these non-employable.

Not only is Linux useless in developing work skills for these kids, it is also extremely difficult to learn. Thus, only those who are supremely motivated - such as young boys already pursuing the maths and sciences - would make the effort to learn. The other, majority of students would avoid computing. And they would lack computer skills needed for them to succeed academically and professionally.

The present paradigm is to introduce kids to Windows or MacIntosh

operating systems. Then, the kids move to more specialized operating systems as the need arises. Unix and Linux are often used by academics - not by the rest of the world.

I therefore respectfully submit that the settlement agreement is, on topic (b), completely fair and valuable to the nation as a whole.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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